

# On the Gulf War

By David Chandler

*[Printed in the January 7, 1991 Daily Bulletin, Upland, CA. Had I known what a humanitarian travesty the sanctions would become, I would not have condoned them either.]*

The official reasons given by the Bush administration for going to war in the Persian Gulf are not adequate to explain our aggressive posture. Not only can war be avoided, we can quite likely achieve our ends without war. Without firing a shot Hussain's momentum has already been halted, no new territory is in imminent danger, the hostage issue has been resolved, and effective sanctions are in place. So where is the urgency to go to war come January 15? We have ample time to talk and apply pressure by other means. Talk is cheaper than blood, and backed by sanctions and unified world opinion, negotiations could be far more productive in the long run.

The current administration seems eager for war at any cost. If Hussain, the tyrant, has killed thousands, Bush, the virtuous, would have us kill and be killed by the tens or even hundreds of thousands. The big unanswered question is WHY?! Who will profit from sending thousands of US and Iraqi boys to their deaths when there are viable alternatives?

The official answers that have been put forward do not hold up to scrutiny. The real answers may not be forthcoming from the administration because they may well be too cynical to be uttered aloud. Is it to rescue the Pentagon budget from a five year \$243 billion post Cold War budget cut? Is it to distract those of us at home from the recession, the multi-trillion dollar S & L scam, and other domestic issues that won't go away easily? Is it an excuse to establish a permanent military presence in the Middle East with bases in Saudi Arabia? Is it a testing ground for new generations of military hardware?

There is nothing patriotic about killing or dying for any of the above causes. The American People must learn to say no to war and to the hallucinogenic arguments put forward in its favor.